Amendments to the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method for multicast document printing, the method comprising:

~~a)~~ receiving document data to be printed at a host, wherein said document data includes a number of copies of a ~~documents~~ to be created from the document data;

~~b)~~ dividing the number of ~~documents~~ copies to be created into at least two batches for at least two corresponding, separate printers;

~~c)~~ formatting the document data into a print job;

~~d)~~ embedding routing information for distribution of the batches to the corresponding printers into the print job; and

~~e)~~ transmitting the print job as one transmission to the at least two separate printers connected by a common network to the host.

2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the host is a printer.

3. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the host is application software resident in a printer.

4. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the host is a computer.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the host is a scanner.

6. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the printer further comprises a multi-function peripheral.

7. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the printer further comprises a copier.

8. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein the printer further comprises a fax machine.

9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting the print job to at least two separate printers includes reception and temporary storage at a store-and-forward device.

10. (currently amended) A computer readable medium, said medium containing software code comprising:

~~a)~~ code operable to receive document data to be printed at a host, wherein said document data includes a number of ~~documents~~ copies of a document to be created from the document data;

~~b)~~ code operable to divide the number of ~~documents~~ copies to be created into at least two batches for at least two corresponding, separate printers;

~~c)~~ code operable to format the document data into a print job;

~~d)~~ code operable to embed routing information for distribution of the batches to the corresponding printers into the print job; and

~~e)~~ code operable to transmit the print job in one transmission to the at least two separate printers connected by a common network to the host.

11. (original) The medium of claim 10, wherein the computer readable medium is read by a computer.

12. (original) The medium of claim 10, wherein the computer readable medium is read by a printer.

13. (original) The medium of claim 10, wherein the medium is a diskette.

14. (original) The medium of claim 10, wherein the medium is a compact disc.

15. (original) The medium of claim 10, wherein the medium is a network-accessible file.

16. (currently amended) A network device, comprising:

~~a)~~ a port operable to connect to a network and receiving document data to be converted into hard copy output with a predetermined number of ~~documents~~ copies of a document to be created;

~~b)~~ a processor in communication with the port, operable to format the document data into a print job comprising a document and a number of copies of the document and to

assign batches to at least two printers, wherein the sum of ~~documents~~ copies to be created within each batch is substantially equal to the number of ~~documents~~ copies to be created; and

~~e)~~ a communications port operable to transmit the batches in one transmission to printers connected to the network device by a common network.

17. (original) The network device of claim 16, wherein the network device is a computer.

18. (original) The network device of claim 16, wherein the network device is a printer.

19. (original) The network device of claim 16, wherein the processor is a raster image processor.